(b) if so, the details of the experiment, how and how much fly ash is to be used per acre of Crop area, and what has been the precise result of the experiment; and

(c) the steps taken and being taken to popularise use of fly ash in farming?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. Dr. P.D.K.V. Akola has conducted experiments at the College of Agriculture, Nagpur on the use of fly ash for increasing crop yields.

(b) Thirty two field experiments for four years on ten crops have revealed increase in the crop yields, especially on Vertisols and inceptions. The addition of fly ash has been recommended @ 4 t/acre (10 t/ha).

(c) Based on the encouraging results, the University has conducted about 433 demonstrations on cultivators' fields.

Identification of drought genes

1365. MISS MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a new drought genes in chick-pea has been identified;

(b) whether it is grown in semi-arid areas in the country and can withstand the drought by producing double the amount of protein to compensate the shortage of water in dry area;

(c) whether such genes are also present in other plants; how far these have been tried in the drought-hit zones; and

(d) whether it is proposed to transfer these genes to other plants, if so, the details thereof and how far it has proved successful?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No specific drought gene has been identified in chickpea.

(b) The question does not arise.

(c) Several alternate genes have been shown to improve the stress tolerance in crop plants. Such genes include those encoding for enzymes for modifying membrane lipids, LEA proteins, detoxification enzyme and stress inducible transcription factors. Two DNA clones that encode DRE binding (dehydration responsive element binding) proteins, DREB 1A and DREB 2A have been isolated from Arabidopsis. However the research work with these genes is only at experimental stage.

(d) Efforts are underway to clone and characterize drought related genes namely DREB 1A and DREB 2A for its transfer to other plants.

Revamping of BVFCL

1366. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the complete revamping of Brahmaputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Limited (BVFCL) of Namrup has been achieved:

(b) whether the grievances of workers and employees of BVFCL have been removed;

(c) if so, how it is done, and

(d) if not, the difficulties being faced in it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHHATTRA PAL SINGH): (a) The revamp of Namrup units is expected to be completed in February, 2004.

(b) to (d) The main grievance of workers and employees of BVFCL is about revision of their wages, which has not been effected so far.

CBI probe against Johnson & Johnson

1367. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that M/s Johnson & Johnson had been